

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: LENINGRAD ART EXHIBITION A SUCCESS

REF: USIA 22350

USIA FOR IBS, IEE, IPS

1. TWO MOSCOW EMBOFFS VISITED LENINGRAD EXHIBITION OF WORKS OF UNOFFICIAL ARTISTS ON SEPTEMBER 13 AND FOUND IT A SUCCESSFUL AND POPULAR AFFAIR. DESPITE STRICT POLICE CONTROLS ON VISITOR ACCESS, TOTAL OF MORE THAN 3700 PERSONS VIEWED EXHIBITION ON SEPTEMBER 13, THIRD DAY OF 10-DAY EXHIBITION. EIGHTY-EIGHT ARTISTS FROM LENINGRAD WERE PERMITTED TO ENTER FOUR WORKS A PIECE ALTHOUGH SOME SHOWED MORE SINCE SMALLER PIECES WERE PRORATED BY SIZE. THREE ARTISTS WERE REFUSED PERMISSION TO EXHIBIT BY LENINGRAD AUTHORITIES AS PUNISHMENT FOR ARRANGING AN UNAUTHORIZED EXHIBITION ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO. THE PARAMETERS OF SOCIALIST REALISM WERE EXPANDED CONSIDERABLY TO PERMIT THE PAINTINGS OF THE UNOFFICIAL ARTISTS; THE ONLY RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED WERE BANS ON WORKS THAT ARE ANTI-SOVIET, POLITICAL, OVERTLY RELIGIOUS, OR PORNOGRAPHIC.

2. ONLY PUBLICITY PERMITTED WAS BRIEF RADIO SPOT ANNOUNCEMENT

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THAT AN EXHIBIT WAS TO OPEN. ARTISTS' ATTEMPTS TO PLACE ADS IN

LOCAL PRESS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. ATTENDANCE ON FIRST DAY WAS VERY SMALL, BUT IS BUILDING THROUGH WORD-OF-MOUTH ADVERTISING. LENINGRAD POLICE PUT CONSIDERABLE FORCES AND EQUIPMENT ON THE SCENE ON FIRST DAY, BUT ARE VISIBLY RELAXING AS EXHIBIT PROCEEDS WITHOUT INCIDENT. VISITORS ARE FORCED TO QUEUE WITHIN METAL BARRIERS AND ARE ALLOWED TO ENTER IN GROUPS FOR 45 MINUTES. MANY VISITORS HAD STOOD IN LINE FOR HOURS, BUT EMBOFFS WERE ALLOWED IN QUICKLY AFTER SHOWING DIP CARDS.

3. ARTISTS ARE HAPPY WITH EXHIBITION HALL, NEVSKIY PALACE OF CULTURE ON PROSPEKT OBUKHOVSKOY OBORONY, DOM 32, WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT. HALL IS A FOURTH FLOOR WALK-UP BUT LARGE. VISITORS ARE WELL DRESSED AND ORDERLY; EMBOFFS WERE IMPRESSED BY NUMBERS OF UNIFORMED OFFICERS WHO SHOWED INTEREST IN PAINTINGS. LENINGRAD ARTISTS ARE PLEASED WITH ARRANGEMENTS AND REGARD EXHIBIT AS GOOD OMEN FOR MOSCOW EXHIBIT SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 20-30. LENINGRADERS PLAN TO ATTEND MOSCOW EXHIBIT ALTHOUGH NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER PAINTINGS.
MATLOCK

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